



Field Work in Iran Continues

**Camp Two, Near Sama
North Slope, Elburz Mountains**
(4,200 feet elevation)

August 24: That good man, Kosrow Sariri,¹ turned up in camp on the night of the 22nd, not only laden with such desiderata as butter, fruit, cookies, bread, and loafcake, but with a stack of letters. We were delighted to hear from the Museum. By now you will have heard about the wild sheep and goat specimens which are en route. We thought hunting that group of animals quite exciting.

At this moment there is much activity in camp. Douglas is skinning the first hare over in front of his tent under the interested eye of a villager who resembles, more than a little, a brigand. Kosrow Sariri and Nicola, our driver, have started a fire under a huge copper kettle borrowed from the village and are boiling bear bones. Bill is well away from

the tents skinning a jackal, while I sit under a huge walnut tree happily writing to you.

So far we have taken 27 mammal species in all. At this camp we have added to the collections a doe and a fawn maral,² one roebuck, one bear beautifully silver tipped, three jackals, one hare, one pig, plus some bats, rats, and mice. The dormice are large and fluffy tailed—very pretty. They live in the walnut trees. The ones caught here are rolling fat, but the ones Doug took at 6,000 feet are much thinner by comparison.

The hunting here is rather hard; the hills are dry, the padding of leaves and twigs extremely crackly. The night hunting has not yet produced very much. Bill and Doug sit in the spare tires on top of the truck and come leaping down when they see any shining eyes. It's slim picking, but we are rather pleased with what we have obtained.

² Maral is a name for the large Persian form of the red deer, *Cervus elephus*.

Janice K. Street

Mrs. Street continues the narrative, begun in the November BULLETIN, of the W. S. and J. K. Street Expedition of Chicago Natural History Museum to Iran. Members of the expedition include her husband and the expedition's leader, Mr. William S. Street, and mammalogist Douglas Lay.

The trip over the Chalus Road down here to our second camp was spectacular. We drove to 10,000 feet, then through a one-lane tunnel over a mile long. On the other side of it we started down one horseshoe curve after another. In places we went through narrow canyons cut through the rocks, sometimes with great overhangs of rock.

We passed through a couple of villages where houses were of stone and mud, usually with no windows. The village shop, if there was one, was merely a dark hole in a wall. Always, though, a table or two with chairs, where you could stop

¹ Representative of the Game Council of Iran who has acted as "chief-of-staff" for the expedition.

LEFT: William S. Street kneels to photograph one of his field "prizes" held by Douglas Lay.

for tea, were set out by the road. Or in an out-of-the-way place you might see a man with a samovar, and one or two little glasses on china saucers, selling tea. The tea is served in the glass, you then pour the tea in the saucer, put a sugar lump in your mouth, and drink from the saucer.

At Pal-e-Dowab (under 2,000 feet elevation), we turned off the main road and traveled about 15 miles over a rough, rocky, winding side road to camp. It took us two hours, and we felt shaken up for the first time. The camp is at 4,200 feet, with hills on both sides and higher mountains beyond. It is delightful. I have the same feeling here that I did at Doab, of hills overlapping as far as one can see.

The hills are dry with scrub growth (much thorn bush), which grows heavier as you go up higher toward the forest. Yet in spite of the dry hills and rocky terrain there is a feeling of lushness in the green fields of rice and arzan, the great walnut trees, and the small vegetable gardens. Every so often there is an oasis. In the center of a velvet green field one may see several piles of stones placed there when the field was cleared. All the fields are tilled and worked by hand or with the aid of crude implements.

Looking from our tent down-valley we see green fields, trees, berry bushes, and other crops. They give the appearance of lavishness but do not show how hard the people work to wrest a living from the hill. They have done a remarkable job putting in the irrigation ditches which make the green possible. Back of us to either side a narrow valley runs between high rock cliffs and winds, slowly climbing, among the bases of the hills. These hills are rugged looking and splendid, with green trees growing out of the rock. There are many thistles all around us—some yellow, some just plain thistle color, but the ones I love are a periwinkle blue. There are also blue daisies, and, believe it or not, blue butterflies to match. Charming!

The village of Sama is quite close. The people have very, very little. Many of the children have immense tummies from dietary deficiency. But they are a friendly, happy people. In the early morning we hear the boys taking the

cattle, and the men starting out with mules or horses for the fields, going along the trails on either side of camp, singing and laughing.

The houses are stone, chinked with mud and straw. One affluent citizen, whose house is walled away from the rest, allowed us to look inside. There were three rooms: one, the kitchen area—very cool inside, with plastered walls. Across one corner hung a baby bed. A sack of wheat and a sack of another grain stood side by side. In one corner a collection of elegant copper utensils and a kerosene single burner. On the lone shelf, two lamps. The next two rooms were locked and identical—large, high-ceilinged, and deliciously cool. On the floor were lovely Persian rugs. Neat bed rolls with round pillows on top were stacked at the back. In the yard were rugs and mats with arzan and wheat spread on them to dry.

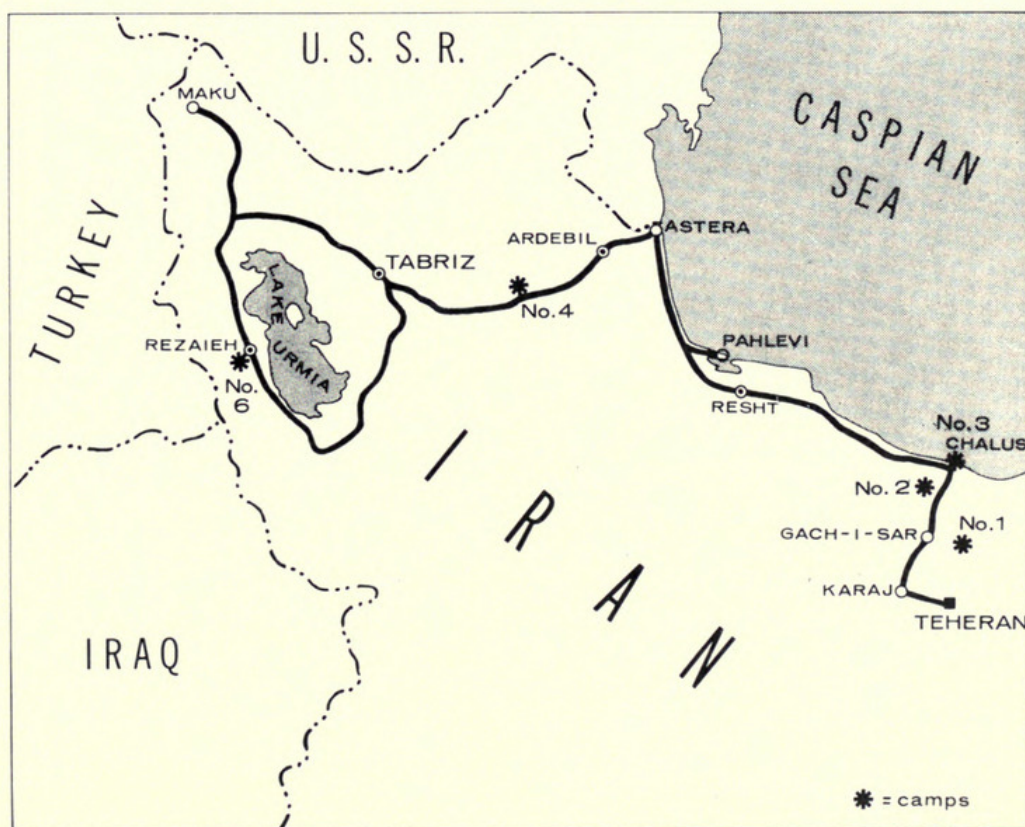
We went to the village armed with two cameras, one a Polaroid, and a pocket full of balloons. At first the women all covered their faces and ran to hide. I took a picture of two youngsters and had them show it. That did it. We were swamped. Everyone wanted "aks" (pictures). It was an interesting experience, photographing the women with babies on their backs and tiny chil-

dren carrying babies. The women and children all dress alike: a long, full printed cotton shirt; then a shift, perhaps red or a print, goes over that, split on the sides for freedom in walking. Some women also wear a sleeveless jacket that may have silver-looking coins on the edges. Always a scarf is tied over and around the head, back far enough to show a piece of hat attached to the scarf. It's shaped like the front of an overseas cap—black with silver braid and a touch of red. With their first reticence over, the women now come to camp in ones or twos each day for a picture, and have lost all shyness.

Douglas is going to be away for a couple of days working the traps for a few mice in another area. He had hoped to go up the mountain today for more dormice, but for the first time there are low clouds and fog, and he will have to wait.

A few days ago, Bill took off with Isa, the local Game Council man. They left camp and started straight up the mountains where they hunted and camped at 6,500 feet, then went on up to 8,400 where the two maral were taken. A beautiful, but precipitous piece of country, with extremely large trees, six to eight feet through: alders and beeches, with

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thousands of trilliums below. Holly, too.

One thing I can say, this country is good for the waistline. We've all tightened up the belts a bit, which calls for some boasting. Bill is doing his best to have the same waistline measurement as Doug. I measure each of them every few days. (Just between the two of us, I pull the tape tighter when measuring Bill!) Before too long we will move on to the Caspian.

Camp Six, near Rezaiah On the banks of the Bardasar Chay (River)

September 18: Our tents are set up among the willow trees overlooking a small river—really a stream—some distance from the road. A hill rises directly behind us and an old flour mill is built into it. Made of rock and mud, it's been there for over a hundred years. The miller grinds the wheat on a stone wheel. The mill is built over water ditches, so he controls the water. We are almost surrounded with ditches.

The mill is built on three levels: one where the wheat is poured, one where the miller (a nice gentle soul who looks as though a breath of wind would blow him away) keeps his meager belongings, and the lowest where the wheel is, and a trough into which the flour falls. Outside, in a large flat area, the wheat is sifted before being ground.

Driving from Chalus westward along the Caspian coast, we experienced some delightful moments. We enjoyed seeing the tea plantations. Through binoculars we could see the neat rows of tea plants way up the mountain sides. Girls in gaily colored dresses were picking tea leaves in the fields. The tea factories are the best looking buildings we have seen, painted and surrounded with gardens.

Beyond Bandar Pahlovi we drove through miles of wild pomegranate, some in bloom, some with fruit.

At Astara we stopped at a small caviar packing plant. It comprised two square rooms, not large, connected by a roofed passageway. One room held the vats for sturgeon. The caviar is put in salt water, then drained in large sieves. In the other room, the caviar was packed. The place was painted white and blue and was very clean.

SERAPIS

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days ran on and on, the list would still be incomplete. For his mighty works have not come to a standstill: there are more today than yesterday. Each day, each night, adds new ones to the tale."

The conception of one almighty god in Hellenistic religion, as incorporated in the image of Serapis, spread throughout

Beyond Astara we drove over plateau country, 5,200 feet high. It reminded us of eastern Washington. Dry farming was done and we saw quantities of wheat being threshed with water buffalo or by hand. Plowing was done with a buffalo and crude implements. Tremendous amounts of land were under cultivation. Every bit of green was being gathered and stored.

Here we began seeing the Turkish style villages. They are completely different from the others, with square mud houses, flat-roofed, and a series of courts seemingly connecting everything. There were a few small windows, or more often just a door. Many of the houses were

the Mediterranean. The most efficient propagators of his worship were the sailors and mariners who carried the cult to the Black Sea and the coast of the Atlantic Ocean. The temple of Serapis at Eboracum, near York, in Britain, and the cults at Silchester and London, give an idea of the northern boundaries of the god's worship in the ancient world.

built wall to wall. Elsewhere, winding walkways ran between quite high walls.

The flat roofs of the houses were used for storage, as was evidenced by the stacks of straw and the high, cone-shaped stocks of winter fuel—patties of cow dung and straw. After being made, these are dried on the walls. The villagers' cattle and sheep looked very good, and where land has been irrigated, vegetables were growing.

Ardabil was a busy town. We were intrigued by the many horse-drawn carriages. There wasn't one in good repair. The fenders were frayed and merely tied on, the upholstery was torn and patched—but the driver sat high and proud in his ragged coat. Many of the carriages were painted blue or red and decorated with a row of colored flowers. The horses not only sported beads and bells, but red yarn tassels or pompoms were attached in several places.

Two-wheeled carts carried tanks of water to sell. Children would run out and try to turn the spigot on and take some water. The driver carried a stick and when he saw them he would leap off and give chase. Meanwhile, the horse just plodded on.

This is a fertile valley, with much tobacco and large vineyards. Both crops are being picked now and dried. There is also a large sugar factory. While some sugar beets are grown in this vicinity, most are sent in from Khoi and other places. Melons grow everywhere, and these are the sweetest yet.

A few days ago, Bill, Nicola, and I left camp at 8:30 A.M. and took off to find new jerboa fields. We had been told that the jerboas sometimes came out in daytime. Found a most promising looking field, loaded with burrows, but saw no animals. Decided to return at dusk.
(To be continued)

THE COVER

Chinese belt toggles, photographed to almost exact size, create an unusual checkerboard effect on this month's cover. What are belt toggles? As their photographs show, they are beautifully fashioned objects, two to three inches in size, made from ivory, wood, lacquer, metal, jade, or other hard materials, including seeds. Traditionally, belt toggles were used by Chinese gentlemen as counterweights for various personal accessories—cases for pipes, fans, and spectacles, portable writing sets, portable eating kits—which were carried suspended from a cord looped over the belt. Most of these toggles date from the 19th Century, but some are older, including one inscribed with the date, 1403. The 20 pieces pictured on the cover are part of a collection of 237 recently presented as a gift to the Museum by Miss C. F. Bieber of Santa Fe, New Mexico. All will be displayed in the Museum's hall of Chinese and Tibetan ethnology (Hall 32) whose reinstallation is in progress.



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